

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SNM-02

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DRAFTED BY: S/NM:RDUGSTAD

APPROVED BY: S/NM:DHERNST

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 064447

FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

FOLLOWING REPEATS KINGSTON 1092 ACTION DEPT DEA DEA MIAMI  
MARCH 19TH

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 1092

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, JM

SUBJECT: OPERATION MINI-BUCCANEER

FROM AMBASSADOR FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE AND  
ADMINISTRATOR BARTELS; DEPARTMENT PASS TO IGA TODD

1. AS YOU KNOW, MINI-BUCANEER WAS ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED BY  
MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND JUSTICE ELI MATLON WHO  
STRONGLY REQUESTED OUR SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE. WE AGREED  
DESPITE SOME RESERVATIONS RELATED PARTLY TO TIMING PROBLEMS  
(THE OPERATION WAS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MARCH 3) AND PARTLY TO  
PAST EXPERIENCE. AS THE OPERATION PROGRESSED BOTH I AND  
COUNTRY TEAM BECAME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED AT THE FAILURE OF  
THE GOJ TO MEET ITS COMMITMENTS. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SOME  
DELAY ON OUR PART IN ACQUIRING AIRCRAFT PARTS, THE HELI-  
COPTER DESIGNATED FOR MINI-BUCCANEER WAS OPERATIONAL MARCH 7.

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HOWEVER, NO SORTIES WERE EVER FLOWN. THE JCF AND JDF HAVE

MUSTERED THE TROOPS REQUIRED UNDER THE AGREEMENT AT THE FORWARD BASE AT MONEAGUE, BUT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN USED FOR ANY ERADICATION OPERATIONS. YOU WILL RECALL THAT THE AGREEMENT REQUIRES THE GOJ TO CARRY OUT ERADICATION OPERATIONS WHETHER OR OR NOT AIR SUPPORT WERE AVAILABLE

2. ON THURSDAY, MARCH 13, I CALLED ON MATALON WITH SA COOPER TO REVIEW SITUATION. ALTHOUGH CONCERNED BY THE FAILURE OF MINI-BUCCANEER TO GET UNDERWAY, HE SEEMED DISTRACTED AND IS OBVIOUSLY UNDER ENORMOUS PRESSURE BECAUSE OF THE RECENT RESURGENCE OF CRIME IN JAMAICA AND HIS LIMITED RESOURCES FOR COPING WITH IT. OUTBREAKS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN WESTERN KINGSTON INCLUDING ALMOST NIGHTLY GUN FIGHTS ARE PARTICULARLY WORRISOME TO HIM. HE PROMISED TO EXAMINE MINI-BUCCANEER AND LET ME KNOW HIS CONCLUSIONS FORTHWITH. I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD NOT BE AVERSE TO A GRACEFUL WAY OUT OF MINI-BUCCANEER IF ONE COULD BE FOUND. I EXPECTED TO HEAR FROM HIM MARCH 14, BUT DID NOT.

3. ON MARCH 17 WE HELD A FULL-SCALE IN-HOUSE REVIEW OF THE SITUATION INCLUDING ALL RELEVANT DEA AND EMBASSY PERSONNEL. RICHARD DUGSTAD OF S/NM SAT IN ON THIS MEETING AND HIS WASHINGTON PERSPECTIVES WERE MOST HELPFUL, HE AGREED WITH ITS CONCLUSIONS. AFTER A FULL AND FRANK DISCUSSION I DECIDED TO MAKE ONE MORE ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN MATALON'S VIEWS WITH RESPECT TO MINI-BUCCANEER BQT, IN THE ABSENCE OF A MARKED AND UNEXPECTED CHANGE, TO ABORT THE OPERATION.

4. EFFORTS TO REACH MATALON WERE UNSUCCESSFUL FOR THE REMAINDER OF THAT DAY. SA COOPER WAS ABLE TO TALK BRIEFLY WITH MATALON THE MORNING OF MARCH 18. HE REPORTS THAT MATALON INDICATED AGREEMENT AT SHUTTING DOWN MINI-BUCCANEER. MATALON FURTHER SAID THAT THE GOJ WOULD UNDERTAKE ALL COSTS TO DO WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORWARD BASE AT MONEAGUE THROUGH GOJ BUDGET. IN MY ABSENCE DCM TRIED TO REACH MATALON SEVERAL TIMES BUT WAS INFORMED THAT HE WAS IN MEETINGS. LATER HIS OFFICE CALLED TO REPORT THAT HE HAD BECOME ILL AND GONE HOME. AT THAT POINT WE INFORMED SA CHARLES WALKER THAT HE CONFIDENTIAL

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SHOULD TAKE WHATEVER STEPS WERE NECESSARY TO WITHDRAW US PARTICIPATION FROM MINI-BUCCANEER AND RETURN DEA PERSONNEL TO THE US. SAS JOHN THOMPSON AND S. RAPHAEL HALPERIN RETURNED TO THE US LATE MARCH 10. SA JOHN WALKER SCHEDULED TO RETURN MARCH 20. SA CHARLES WALKER WILL REMAIN FOR A WEEK OR 10 DAYS TO CLEAR UP DETAILS.

5. THE ATMOSPHERE THROUGHOUT THESE EXCHANGES WAS CORDIAL

AND COOPERATIVE AND, WHILE THE MISFIRE OF MINI-BUCCANEER IS UNFORTUNATE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE ATMOSPHERE HAS BEEN SOURED OR THE POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE COLLABORATION HAS BEEN IMPAIRED. THE REASONS FOR GOJ NON-PERFORMANCE ARE NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. COMPETING PRIORITIES ARE UNDOUBTEDLY AN IMPORTANT REASON. THE USUAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THE JCF AND THE JDF HAVE PRESUMABLY ALSO PLAYED A ROLE. PIQUE ON THE PART OF BRIGADIER GREEN AND THE JDF AIR WING AT OUR REFUSAL TO SUPPLY COMMUNICATIONS AND NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT NOT ESSENTIAL FOR FLIGHT OR DIRECTLY RELATED TO MINI-BUCANEER OPERATIONS MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN A FACTOR. THESE PROBLEMS MIGHT HAVE BEEN RESOLVED HAD THERE BEEN UNLIMITED TIME TO DO SO, BUT THE SHORT FUSE AND FIRM CUTOFF DATE FOR THE OPERATION LEFT LITTLE ROOM FOR MANEUVER

6. THE COSTS TO THE USG HAVE BEEN MINOR. US COSTS THUS FAR VIRTUALLY CONFINED TO AIRCRAFT SPARE PARTS AND TDY TIME OF THE FOUR DEA PERSONNEL BROUGHT DOWN FOR THE OPERATION. THESE COSTS SHOULD COME TO LESS THAN \$10,000, THOUGH WE MAY DECIDE WE WISH TO MAKE SOME CONTRIBUTION TO MONEAGUE AS A LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

7. MINI-BUCCANEER WAS A WORTHWHILE PROJECT WHICH MIGHT WELL HAVE SUCCEEDED AND WAS CERTAINLY WORTH A TRY. I APPRECIATE YOUR RAPID RESPONSE AND UNFAILING SUPPORT. YOUR HELP AND THAT OF YOUR ORGANIZATIONS WAS MUCH APPRECIATED. GERARD UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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